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AUGUST, 1936 VOLUME XVII, NUMBER 11

THE RELIEF LOAD OF STATES AND CITIES AS SHOWN BY RECENT AASW SURVEY

WHAT THE PRESS HAS TO SAY ABOUT THE NEW JERSEY RELIEF EXPERIMENT

OPERATION OF A VOLUNTARY MERIT SYSTEM FOR PUBLIC WELFARE PERSONNEL

Harrison A. Dobbs Describes and Appraises the System as Used in Chicago

MORE ABOUT AASW MEETINGS AT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

RESULTS OF AASW ELECTION. PARTY PLATFORMS AND AASW PLANKS, CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS AND OTHER NOTES, SPECIFICATIONS FOR PUBLIC WELFARE POSITIONS DRAFTED BY OHIO CHAPTERS

Results of Election for Officers and Committee Members

Results of the annual election of officers and of Executive and Nominating Committee members, is announced by Elizabeth Dexter, Secretary of the Association, who is charged by the by-laws to canvass the votes and announce the outcome.

As there were no contests for officers' posts, the list is the same as contained on the ballots. Three new members of the Executive Committee were elected to serve for three years, and a chairman and four members of the Nominating Committee to serve for one year. The election results are shown below. A total of 2740 ballots, in the mails by July 21st, were counted.

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 1936-37

OFFICERS

President—LINTON B. SWIFT.....New York City
1st *Vice-Pres.*—HARRY GREENSTEIN.....Baltimore
2nd *Vice-Pres.*—MARTHA A. CHICKERING San Francisco
3rd *Vice-Pres.*—GRACE ABBOTT.....Chicago
Secretary—LEAH H. FEDER.....St. Louis
Treasurer—STANTON M. STRAWSON (re-elected) White Plains

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Pierce Atwater—St. Paul*
Ewan Clague—Washington, D. C.*
Malcolm S. Nichols—Boston*
Peter Kasius—St. Louis
Jacob Kepecs—Chicago
Katharine F. Lenroot—Washington, D. C.
Frederick I. Daniels—New York City
Florence M. Mason—Cleveland
Mary A. Howell—Richmond

Retiring Members: Mrs. Kathleen J. Lowrie, Miss S. P. Breckenridge, Mrs. Mabel H. Mattingly (deceased)

Chairmen of standing committees and divisions, when appointed, will also be members of the Executive Committee.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

FRANK J. BRUNO, St. Louis, *Chairman*
Helen W. Hanchette—Cleveland
Betsey Libbey—Philadelphia
George W. Rabinoff—New York City
Forrester B. Washington, Atlanta

The Nominating Committee for the past year: Antoinette Cannon, Chairman; William W. Burke, Arlien Johnson, Florence M. Warner, Wendell E. Johnson.

* Members whose names are in italics were elected this year for three year terms.

Civil Service Here and There

The United States Civil Service Commission reports that 26,000 applications had been received for the position of Junior Civil Service Examiner, for which the closing date was June 10.

* * *

A new ruling adopted by the New Jersey Civil Service Commission and effective August 1, requires candidates for civil service positions in the county or municipal service in New Jersey to have one year's residence in that county or municipality for which the test is held. Previously there was no residence requirement for county or municipal examinations. It was first proposed to set a residence requirement of five months in the county and thirty days in the municipality but this was amended to establish a one year requirement for both. "No objections were voiced at the hearing conducted by the New Jersey Civil Service Commission," according to the newspaper report of the action.

Interest in Professional Literature at Arizona Conference

The Arizona Chapter sponsored a professional literature booth at the recent Arizona Conference of Social Work, assembling publications from a number of associations and publishing houses including Survey Associates, Family Welfare Association, University of Chicago Press, Russell Sage Foundation, AASW, Child Welfare League, American Public Welfare Association, and Catholic Charities Review. Eileen Ward, chairman of the Chapter reports that different members of the Chapter took charge of the booth and that the total sales amounted to $143. The size of the sales is an indication both of the Chapter's successful management of the project and of a very promising professional interest in a part of the country where social work is a relatively new development. The Conference was the second one held in the state since the start of social work under the ERA. In addition to the interest shown in the publications on sale, two agencies asked to have lists prepared for their consideration in planning social work libraries.

"Compass" Publication Schedule

Attention of members and subscribers is again called to the fact that the former publication schedule of *The Compass* under which the August issue was omitted has been changed and the September issue omitted instead. With this change the August, 1936, issue becomes No. 11 of Volume XVII and the October, 1936, issue will be No. 1 of Volume XVIII.

News from Washington University Department of Social Work

Dr. E. Van Norman Emery of the Institute of Human Relations, Yale University, will join the faculty of the George Warren Brown Department of Social Work, Washington University, St. Louis, this fall. He will give courses in Psychiatric Aspects of Social Case Work, Application of Psychiatry to Social Case Work and a seminar course. He will also serve as psychiatric consultant for the St. Louis Children's Aid Society and the St. Louis Provident Association.

In June, 1938, the Department of Social Work at Washington University will become exclusively a graduate professional school. In the past it has given both graduate and undergraduate instruction. The name of the new Master's degree will be Master of Social Work. The old degree of B.S. in Social Work will be hereafter B.S. in Public Administration and will be awarded by the School of Business and Public Administration for undergraduate specialization in the social sciences.

Qualified Psychiatrists Now Licensed in New York State

Standardization of practice in the field of psychiatry has been materially advanced in New York State by the passage of a law in the last session of the legislature providing for certification of qualified psychiatrists.

The first application of this standardizing process is provided for in a second law passed by the legislature requiring that one psychiatrist who has been licensed as qualified be appointed on lunacy commissions in mental cases. Under the old law "three disinterested persons" had to be appointed to lunacy commissions and incompetent testimony was the frequent result. With one licensed psychiatrist on every such commission under the new law, expert and competent testimony will now be available.

Licensing of qualified psychiatrists, which is already under way, is in the hands of a Board of Examiners under the State Department of Mental Hygiene. The standards which psychiatrists must meet to be licensed are as follows:

1. At least five years' experience in medical practice.
2. a. Two years' full time experience since 1920 in an institution for mental patients of over fifty beds, or
   b. Five years immediately prior to application in practice substantially with mental patients, or
   c. Three years' experience in an approved clinic for mental patients.

Announcements of Civil Service Examinations

1. UNITED STATES

   For application forms address:

   U. S. Civil Service Commission, Washington, D. C., or Secretary, Board of U. S. Civil Service Examiners at any first class post office.

Filing Date—August 10, 1936

EXTENSION SPECIALIST IN PARENT EDUCATION, Division of Cooperative Extension Work, Department of Agriculture. *Salary*: $4,600; *Age*: under 53; *Requirements*: Bachelor's degree in home economics plus one year of graduate study in education and social sciences with special application to family life; five years' experience in home economics extension, three of which have been in field of parent education. U. S. citizen and residence in state or territory claimed for at least six months next preceding closing date for receipt of application. No written examination required—applicants rated on education and experience and thesis or published writings.

2. NEW YORK CITY *(Board of Examiners, New York City Board of Education).*

ASSISTANT PSYCHIATRIC SOCIAL WORKER, Bureau of Child Guidance, Board of Education, 500 Park Avenue, New York City. *Salary*: $3000-$4,000 with six annual increments of $200 a year; *Age*: 21-40; *Preparation*: College degree with eight semester hours in approved courses in the study and treatment of personality and behavior disorders of children; *Experience*: 800 hours of experience in a clinic for the study and treatment of personality and behavior disorders of children and either two years of experience in social case work or six years of teaching or six years of experience as an attendance officer.

This examination, for which there are no residence requirements, will probably be held in October. Those interested should write to the Board of Education, 500 Park Avenue, N. Y. C., for specific information and application forms.

3. NEW YORK STATE

   For application forms address:

   State Department of Civil Service, Albany, New York. Number and title of position should be specified in writing for forms.

Filing Date—August 14, 1936

184. VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE SUPERVISOR, Department of Correction. *Salary*: $2101-$2640 (one appointment expected at Walkill Prison, male preferred, at $2500 without maintenance); *Age*: 25 to 40; *Requirements*: AB. degree with at least 20 credit hours in educational methods and courses in vocational subjects. Additional credit given for successful completion of courses in engineering, penology, sociology, psychology, etc.; five years of satisfactory recent teaching or counselling experience in the vocational training and guidance fields, one year of which shall have been in a penal or correctional institution, preferably for adults, and one year of which preferably shall have been in a supervisory capacity; or three years of such experience in a penal or correctional institution. No written examination required.

Dividing the Responsibility in Relief

WHEN the WPA program was first announced, official statements were to the effect that the federal government had calculated that there were approximately 5,300,000 persons and families receiving relief, of which about 3,800,000 would be provided for through the federal work program. The estimated balance of approximately 1,500,000, the official releases said, would be turned back to state and local governments.

In the April issue of *The Compass* it was pointed out that the official estimate of the number of persons on relief was undoubtedly a conservative one and that actually the total was nearer 6,000,000 than 5,300,000, and further that official calculations indicated that when the program was actually underway only 3,200,000 of those transferred to WPA represented persons taken from relief rolls. *The Compass* article pointed out that by subtracting 3,200,000 from 6,000,000, the balance left as the share of the state and local governments was approximately 2,800,000 rather than 1,500,000.

At that time, due to the fact that all national reporting of statistics had been abandoned with the inauguration of the WPA, it was impossible to substantiate our claim that the state and local governments were faced with a problem much larger than they had been led to anticipate. The official calculations in round numbers had been to the effect that the federal government would provide for 70 per cent of the load leaving only 30 per cent as the load of the states.

Within the past two weeks the AASW has completed a survey of relief loads in 15 states and 23 cities, the results of which tend to substantiate the claim made in the April *Compass* that state and local governments were struggling with a load very much larger than they had been told they would be expected to carry.

In March, 1936, the general relief load resting upon the 15 states taken together, the survey shows, is equal to 50 per cent of the load they were carrying in July, 1935, before the WPA program was inaugurated (1,074,988 cases in March, 1936, as compared with 2,142,295 cases in July, 1935). The load carried by the 23 cities is revealed as 58 per cent of the former combined load (332,302 cases in March, 1936, as compared with 577,192 cases in July, 1935).*

Considering the areas separately it appears that the March, 1936, loads in the 15 states and 23 cities were equal to the following per cents of the July, 1935 loads:

70 and under 79 per cent in 1 state
60 and under 69 per cent in 4 states
50 and under 59 per cent in 2 states
40 and under 49 per cent in 3 states
30 and under 39 per cent in 2 states
20 and under 29 per cent in 2 states
10 and under 19 per cent in 1 state

80 and under 89 per cent in 1 city
70 and under 79 per cent in 2 cities
60 and under 69 per cent in 3 cities
50 and under 59 per cent in 6 cities
40 and under 49 per cent in 8 cities
30 and under 39 per cent in 1 city
20 and under 29 per cent in 2 cities

In only 3 states and 2 cities were the per cents as small as the 30 per cent forecast in the division of responsibility predicted in 1935 when the WPA program was launched. In all of the other areas the loads left to the states and cities were greater than the predicted 30 per cent and in most instances much greater.

The table of figures above, however, does not tell the whole story for in those states where the present load is small there are other factors which have brought about reductions. For example in 3 states (Texas, Louisiana and Washington) the relatively small residual loads are due in considerable degree to policies of terminating relief to certain categories—namely, all persons classed as "employable"—because of a lack of funds.

In Texas where the March, 1936, load is only 18 per cent of the July, 1935 load, the state relief administration on January 1, 1936, refused any further relief to "employables." Similar termination of relief to able-bodied was reported in Louisiana and certain counties in Maryland.

By another analysis of the figures obtained from 16 states and 26 cities the March cases—for which only state and local funds were available—are compared with the cases transferred since last July to the WPA and other federal work programs. In two of the states reporting on this

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Officers
Linton B. Swift, *Pres.* Grace Abbott, *3rd V-Pres.*
Harry Greenstein, *1st V-Pres.* Leah H. Feder, *Sec.*
Martha A. Chickering, *2nd V-Pres.*
Stanton M. Strawson, *Treas.*
Walter West—*Executive Secretary*
Florence Taylor—*Editor, The Compass*

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point—Iowa and one other mid-western state—the residual relief load in March was actually larger than the load so transferred. In the District of Columbia, South Dakota, New York, Michigan, and Pennsylvania (named in the descending order of their ratios) the residual load was over three-quarters as large. In Minnesota and Oklahoma it was between one-half and three-quarters as large. The remaining states—in which it was between one-fifth and one-half the size of the transferred load—are Connecticut, Washington, California, Texas, Louisiana, Idaho, and Montana. Comment has already been made upon factors which account largely for the relatively small residual loads of Texas, Louisiana, and Idaho in this comparison.

Similar variations appear for the 26 cities giving this particular information. Five of them—Philadelphia, Rochester, Lansing, Sioux City and Pittsburgh—show a residual relief load greater than the transferred load. In Philadelphia and Rochester it was more than one-fourth greater. In the 21 remaining cities the residual load was the smaller.

These figures are significant in that they substantiate the position taken by the Association in April; namely that many states and cities have been left with a burden much larger than they had been led to believe would be theirs and further that large numbers of persons in need who cannot be absorbed by the work program but who have been labelled "employable" have been denied any relief in many areas because they are considered by the states as the responsibility of the federal government. This attitude on the part of various states is directly attributable to the repeated announcements by WPA officials that the federal government would care for employables (giving the impression that by employables was meant all employables and not a fraction of that group) leaving the care of so-called unemployables as the responsibility of the various states and local governments.

These announcements and action in various states to deny relief to able-bodied persons, the current attitude of many state officials to follow the lead of the federal government and "get out of this business of relief," has created an uneven pattern of relief administration in the various states which approximates the conditions existing prior to 1931 before the federal government assumed any responsibility for relief.

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* Accessions to relief rolls must also be considered as a factor in this regard.

The Press Evaluates the New Jersey Relief Experiment

A CROSS SECTION OF EDITORIAL OPINION

THE findings of various surveys and studies of the New Jersey Relief situation has occupied the attention of editors during the past three weeks and editorial columns reveal that the opinion of editors on the significance of the findings has not been unanimous. Conservative journals tended to dispute findings indicating harsh treatment of relief clients, inadequate food orders and general curtailment of relief, concentrating their attention on the alleged elimination of chiselers and pointing out the benefits of such "purging of relief rolls of undeserving." Other papers hailed the reporting of relief inadequacies and denial of relief as "revealing the true facts about the Jersey experiment."

Herewith are a few samples of editorial treatment of the New Jersey experiment culled from newspapers and periodicals that have come to our attention.

The *Trenton State Gazette* said:

After a considerable period of experimentation with relief administered and financed by local governments, it is now possible to reach fairly definite conclusions. They may be summarized briefly. Municipal control of relief has produced reductions in costs and has virtually eliminated the unworthy from the rolls. In addition, it has deprived many deserving persons of help, due to the virtual abandonment of relief in certain municipalities, and it has also involved cities and towns in new financial problems.

The *Pittsburgh Press* said:

Either Pennsylvania is going to provide for its unemployed or they are going to be turned back to local communities as New Jersey has done. Some of the Old Guard senators already have advocated that, claiming that relief can be administered more efficiently by local communities. . . .

Perhaps . . . the Senate is not aware of what has happened in New Jersey since the state cast its unemployed adrift. A few facts from the survey by the American Association of Social Workers, should prove enlightening. . . . What has happened since then (state withdrawal from relief) is a shameful story. (The editor then lists the findings of the AASW survey.)

The *Newark Evening News* said:

Whether the support now being supplied to the needy is adequate is debatable. That should be the first concern of the legislature and the municipalities. Relief must be administered on a humane as well as business-like basis. Morris County's experience with the Hilbert family illustrated the necessity of reasonably uniform standards and methods of supervision.

A possibly scandalous situation in the Hilbert case was prevented by the fact that Morris has a county welfare board—only two or three counties have—which

was clothed with authority to step into the breach. Other incidents of the kind will inevitably develop unless some system is devised that will remove the cause of disputes arising between municipalities, or between counties, over questions of relief responsibility.

The Camden, N. J., *Courier-Post* said:

Once more the havoc wrought by New Jersey's Legislature in throwing relief back to local communities is placed on full view. . . .

Three weeks ago a WPA survey revealed squalor, licensed beggary and slow death under local relief at local expense. State officials tried to discredit this survey as "politics."

Now comes a more comprehensive survey by the American Association of Social Workers, having no political interest whatever.

It not only confirms the WPA report completely, but it conveys a warning of disaster.

Where the WPA survey covered 1200 typical cases in only a few municipalities, the social workers' investigation covers 41 municipalities.

It charges New Jersey with "inhuman and cruel treatment—experimenting with slow starvation for relief recipients."

Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, of the *World Telegram* wrote:

Some people may think that New Jersey has solved her relief problem for the good of all concerned, but the mother of three-year-old Donald Hastie, who ate paint when there was no food, may be forgiven for wondering if the death of her child is the right solution.

It may be that the tragedy in the Hastie family is an exception and that other mothers of relief families are so clever they can keep their children nourished on fifty cents a week apiece. That must be the case, since the New Jersey League of Municipalities claims there is no "slow starvation" going on in their state.

Yet I can't quite see why the American Association of Social Workers would be interested in spreading this "myth." All the social workers I've met have seemed to me thoroughgoing realists—they could hardly be anything else after six years of depression. Possibly the League of Municipalities has a different definition of starvation. Perhaps they would not say a child is starving until he lay dead in his coffin, and then they'd say it was nothing but lead poisoning.

The *Newark Ledger* said:

What actually happened, of course, was that the state suspended its relief activities not because of any plan or design, but simply because the legislature could not decide on how to raise revenue. The burden was turned over to municipalities, most of which were unprepared to deal with the problem. The municipalities took the only course that was open to them. They spent what money they had available and beyond that suspended relief.

Local control of relief is a wise policy provided the state sees to it that the municipalities have sufficient funds to meet their relief needs and established decent standards. What we have today is not local control, or for that matter any other kind of policy. What we have is chaos and confusion in relief due to the fact that the legislature, finding the relief problem difficult, abandoned all efforts to solve it.

Arthur Train, Jr., in the magazine *Today* said:

Now undoubtedly a great many chiselers have been weeded out. Where there may have been largesse there is no largesse now. Administrative costs have undoubtedly been reduced, and there is a sporting chance that some of the evils inherent in a large central organization have been eradicated. On the other hand, under the present system there is still downright misery that goes unalleviated. And when the workers come back from the truck gardens and the berry fields and the seaside resorts (where many secure seasonal employment), there promises to be more. . . .

The Springfield, Mass., *Republican*, said:

The State of New Jersey, according to the report of the American Association of Social Workers, "stands indicted for inhuman and cruel treatment of its needy citizens." This is a severe judgment. But the Association sent its investigators into forty-one typical communities of the state to study local relief methods and standards, following the act of the state government in turning the responsibility for providing relief back to the cities and towns. The present indictment is based on the work of these investigators. . . .

This is the other side of the economy drive in relief. When the New Jersey State Relief Administration ceased functioning . . . many critics of waste in relief began calling attention to the amount of money now being saved by local relief administrators and overseers of the poor. . . .

The *New York Post* said:

The Republican Party is conducting an important scientific experiment in New Jersey. It is finding out how long it takes little children to starve when food is denied them. The experiment started on April 15 when the . . . legislature stopped state aid to the communities. That meant immediate reductions in relief to about 500,000 persons, 200,000 of whom are children under the age of sixteen.

The American Association of Social Workers shows, in a special report, what has happened since. In the majority of the forty-one towns studied, food allowances have been cut from fifty to seventy-five per cent below the allowances granted when state aid was functioning. . . . That means fifty-eight cents per week per person, or less than nine cents a day. . . .

The New York *Herald Tribune* said:

New Jersey's unpremeditated and more or less fortuitous liquidation of extravagant, demoralizing, centralized poor relief is now attracting some of the attention that the results of that liquidation deserve. The number of surveys of those results which are being made is evidence enough that their economic as well as sociological importance is being more and more widely appreciated. Apart from the material collected by the correspondents of this and other metropolitan newspapers, the first testimony to the reforms in relief administration to the phenomenal elimination of "chiselers" and relief addicts from the rolls and to the savings in the overhead of "the relief business," which resulted from the resumption of the responsibility for poor relief by New Jersey's cities, boroughs and townships, was published in a report to the Republican National Committee by its research bureau.

The *Nation* summed up the situation thus:

A recent survey by the American Association of Social Workers covering forty-one districts in that state (New Jersey), reveals that food allowances have been cut fifty to seventy-five per cent., that no rent payments at all have been made in most communities, that no gas or other fuel is provided, and that in a number of areas no clothing is issued . . . etc., etc. . . . This is typical of what may generally be expected if relief is . . . returned to local communities.

John T. Flynn, in his syndicated column, said:

After more than a month we are beginning to hear

more fully what has happened in New Jersey. The New Jersey State Department of Institutions and Agencies, the New Jersey Conference of Social Work and the American Association of Social Workers have been looking into the problem. What they report is a bit disturbing.

In some towns compulsory road work is provided at twenty cents an hour. At Hammonton, relief workers were forced to take jobs picking berries at from fifty cents to a dollar for eleven hours' work. In one county fifteen and sixteen-year-old girls have been practically forced to work in a cosmetic factory at starvation wages.

The pauper oath is revived. To get food—or rather two dollars a week for food for a family regardless of size—one must sign in certain places a statement beginning: "I, having declared myself a pauper."

. . . In certain towns all aliens are stricken from the rolls. They may starve. In one-fourth of the towns all single men are stricken from the rolls. In as many towns all aid is denied unless you have lived in the town five years.

The *New Republic* said:

Additional confirmation of conditions in New Jersey came last week in a special report of the American Association of Social Workers, based on an independent survey. This association reports that there is actual starvation in New Jersey today. Some people have died because of lack of relief or of medical supplies. In other instances, it charges there is forced labor, both for governmental units and for private employers. It describes one community where the local relief agents have been busily engaged in putting fifteen and sixteen-year-old girls, taken from relief rolls, into a cosmetic factory at starvation wages.

In one-quarter of the towns studied, there is no relief for single men; in one-quarter, no aid is given unless you have lived in the community for five years. In one-fifth of the towns, the food budgets are from 27 to 50 per cent. less than the minimum set up by the ERA. Nearly half the places make no allowance for rent; in one-third, people who are ill get the same food (and no more of it) as those who are well. In four-fifths of the towns, those earning a few dollars a month from the WPA have to live on it, no matter how inadequate it is. In some places, all aliens are considered as non-human and requiring no aid. In one-third of the towns, all previous records have been canceled and the whole dreary business of filling out report forms has begun over again.

Planks in the Platforms of the Two Major Parties

An Examination of Platforms Reveals Some AASW Suggestions Considered, Others Ignored

PRIOR to the conventions of the two major parties the national office submitted to the Resolutions Committees of the Republican and Democratic Parties a statement of the AASW position on such important issues as: provisions for unemployment relief, the merit system, permissive legislation for Puerto Rico, encouragement of low cost housing, development of the United States Employment Service and the need for a system of national statistics to report relief needs and unemployment.

Unemployment and Relief

On the subject of Unemployment and Relief the AASW statement was as follows:

Because there are large numbers of people who have been deprived of their normal means of subsistence through unemployment, physical disability, illness and other causes beyond their control, whose care at the present moment in many areas is uncertain and in some cases non-existent, there is need for effective and sustained participation by the federal government in a program of general assistance in cooperation with state and local governmental units, in addition to public employment and other social security measures.

Such general assistance could best be provided through a system of grants-in-aid to states allocated by a federal authority. This authority should be lodged in one of the regularly established departments of the federal government, closely allied to related governmental services, particularly to the Social Security Board. Actual administration of the program of general assistance should be the responsibility of state and local governments meeting standards laid down by the federal board and assuming responsibility for an equitable share of the total cost of the program. The need of a sustained program requires the substitution of sound administrative methods for improvised emergency measures, particularly with regard to careful selection of personnel on a merit basis.

The Republican Platform treated the subject in this manner:

The necessities of life must be provided for the needy, and hope must be restored pending recovery.

We pledge:

1. The return of responsibility for relief administration to non-political local agencies familiar with community problems.

2. Federal grants-in-aid to the states and territories while the need exists, upon compliance with these conditions: (a) a fair proportion of the total relief burden to be provided from the revenues of states and local governments; (b) all engaged in relief administration to be selected on the basis of merit and fitness; (c) adequate provision to be made for the encouragement of those persons who are trying to become self-supporting.

3. Undertaking of federal public works only on their merits and separate from the administration of relief.

4. A prompt determination of the facts concerning relief and unemployment.

Security

Real security will be possible only when our productive capacity is sufficient to furnish a decent standard of living for all American families and to provide a surplus for future needs and contingencies. For the attainment of that ultimate objective, we look to the

energy, self-reliance and character of our people, and to our system of free enterprise.

Society has an obligation to promote the security of the people, by affording some measure of protection against involuntary unemployment and dependency in old age. The New Deal policies, while purporting to provide social security, have, in fact, endangered it.

We propose a system of old age security, based upon the following principles:

1. We approve a pay-as-you-go policy, which requires of each generation the support of the aged and the determination of what is just and adequate.
2. Every American citizen over sixty-five should receive the supplementary payment necessary to provide a minimum income sufficient to protect him or her from want.
3. Each state and territory, upon complying with simple and general minimum standards, should receive from the federal government a graduated contribution in proportion to its own, up to a fixed maximum.
4. To make this program consistent with sound fiscal policy the federal revenues for this purpose must be provided from the proceeds of a direct tax widely distributed. All will be benefitted and all should contribute.

The Democratic Platform did not include a plank entitled "Relief" but treated the subject under the heading of "Unemployment" as follows:

We believe that unemployment is a national problem, and that it is an inescapable obligation of our government to meet it in a national way. Due to our stimulation of private business, more than five million people have been re-employed; and we shall continue to maintain that the first objective of a program of economic security is maximum employment in private industry at adequate wages. Where business fails to supply such employment, we believe that work at prevailing wages should be provided in cooperation with state and local governments on useful public projects, to the end that the national wealth may be increased, the skill and energy of the worker may be utilized, his morale maintained, and the unemployed assured the opportunity to earn the necessities of life.

Under the heading of "Old Age and Social Security" the Democratic Platform states:

We have built foundations for the security of those who are faced with the hazards of unemployment and old age; for the orphaned, the crippled and the blind. On the foundation of the Social Security Act we are determined to erect a structure of economic security for all our people, making sure that this benefit shall keep step with the ever-increasing capacity of America to provide a high standard of living for all its citizens.

Merit System

On the subject of the merit system both parties declared in favor of the extension of the system. The Republican platform states: "We pledge ourselves to the merit system, virtually destroyed by New Deal spoilsmen. It should be restored, improved and extended." The Democratic platform includes this statement: "We pledge the immediate extension of the merit system through the classified civil service . . . to all non-policy-making positions in the federal service. We shall subject to the civil service law all continuing positions which, because of the emergency, have been exempt from its operation."

United States Employment Service

The AASW statement to both parties on this subject included the following:

At no other time in the nation's history has employment been recognized as so vital a problem of universal public concern. Extension and development of cooperation with states through the United States Employment Service is of great importance, so that the influence of the federal government may be used to establish a high standard employment service operating in the public interest and available in all parts of the nation.

No specific mention of this service was made by either party in the platforms adopted although the Republican platform under the heading of "Re-Employment" includes a sentence as follows: "Adoption of such other policies as will furnish a chance for individual enterprise, industrial expansion and the restoration of jobs." The Democratic platform under the heading of "Unemployment" includes a passage as follows: ". . . We shall continue to maintain that the first objective of a program of economic security is maximum employment in private industry at adequate wages.

Low Cost Housing

On the subject of Low Cost Housing the AASW wrote:

Economic depression of the past few years has emphasized the need for low-cost housing for large numbers of families in the United States. To encourage the development of such housing we urge the establishment of a permanent federal housing authority to be empowered to make grants and loans to local public housing boards for the purpose of promoting and constructing low-cost housing developments.

The Republican platform includes no mention of the subject of housing. The Democratic platform treats this subject as follows, under a plank headed "Housing":

We maintain that our people are entitled to decent, adequate housing at a price which they can afford. In the last three years the federal government, having saved more than two million homes from foreclosure, has taken the first steps in our history to provide decent housing for people of meager incomes. We believe every encouragement should be given to the building of new homes by private enterprise; and that the government should steadily extend its housing program toward the goal of adequate housing for those forced through economic necessities to live in unhealthy and slum conditions.

Puerto Rico

The AASW statement on the subject of Puerto Rico and the possibility of including this posses-

sion under the terms of the Social Security Act included the following:

In view of the fact that large numbers of persons in Puerto Rico are affected by unemployment and other causes which have deprived them of their normal means of subsistence, and because the condition of residents of that possession should be the concern of the federal government in the same manner as residents of the several states, there is need for the inclusion of Puerto Rico under the provisions of the Social Security Act and permissive legislation to provide for the establishment of a permanent department of Public Welfare in Puerto Rico.

Neither the Republican nor Democratic platforms includes any mention of Puerto Rico or any recommendations for the provisions urged by the AASW.

STATISTICS

Believing that there is a need for the systematic collection of statistics on unemployment and relief, the AASW asked that both parties consider the following proposal:

As the relief expenditures of the federal, state and local governments are among the heaviest of public obligations, complete and accurate statistics of unemployment and of relief needs have become essential elements in planning and administering welfare programs. We believe, therefore, that the proper federal bureau or agency should be empowered and equipped to collect such data, correlated with facts on state and local unemployment and relief problems, and to make reports periodically for public information.

The Republican platform under the heading "Relief" includes a statement to the effect that the party pledges to pursue and secure a "prompt determination of the facts concerning relief and unemployment." This does not indicate that such activity would be prolonged or made a permanent service but appears to indicate that a survey or census of unemployed might be undertaken.

The Democratic platform contains no reference to this subject.

Some Observations on the Application of a Voluntary Merit System for Selection of Public Welfare Personnel

HARRISON ALLEN DOBBS

School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago

The national committee on civil service in the Division on Personnel Standards in 1935 planned, among other material for publication, an account of the voluntary system of certification for social workers under the Cook County (Ill.) Bureau of Public Welfare. The value in this account for AASW members and others seemed obvious because social work needs to build upon actual experience with the processes of voluntary certification; experimentation in and inquiry about such procedure under different auspices is increasing throughout the country; Cook County in Illinois has had marked success and its experience answers many of the questions that arise elsewhere.

Harrison A. Dobbs has been working on an account of this procedure for AASW's purposes. Meantime, at a joint meeting of the National Conference of Social Work Committee on Personnel and the American Public Welfare Association, Mr. Dobbs has given the paper which is published here by permission in lieu of the one which was originally planned with the Association's national committee on civil service. This paper gives not only an account of the voluntary system as it operated under Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare but also describes two other experiments under Chicago court auspices. Mr. Dobbs appraises the factors that have contributed to the success of these systems and suggests certain ways that usual civil service practices, as they relate to professional personnel, might be constructively altered and safeguarded on the basis of this success.

QUESTIONS of staff standards in public agencies and methods for the favorable selection of such personnel constitute a challenging and far-reaching problem in social work today. This paper proposes to show how methods of selection of personnel with favorable standards and on a merit basis were established and have been maintained so insistently and satisfactorily in three separately constituted, public agencies of the Chicago area. Some advantages and disadvantages of the particular methods of selection that were used will be briefly discussed. It is recognized that a voluntary plan of selection has limitations and drawbacks. These may offset its desirable qualities. Certain general principles regarding merit selection of personnel that grow out of these three experiences will be suggested. Out of the long activity of this particular community in such matters there are generalizations that have a good deal of consequence in determining further developments in good personnel selection.

Before viewing these Chicago projects singly, a number of influencing factors that these organizations have in common should be mentioned. They indicate similarity in background that prompted action. Each one of these factors has contributed in its distinctive manner to the impetus for and the value of the plan of selection that was ultimately developed.

1. Each organization offers important social ser-

vices of a case work kind to groups of persons that did need, and continue to need, some form of professional assistance.

2. Each for some particular reason did not, or was unable to use, the customary civil service provisions, as instituted by statute for many such staff appointments.
3. Two of these public departments had from their start, and the third one had sometime later, an active and influential advisory committee of representative citizens. Such supporting groups were concerned with the general well-being of these services. Matters of staff selection got their share of attention by these committees along with other organization problems.
4. Each of these three departments, when this system of voluntary selection on merit began, was administered by an able public official who desired a high standard of service. Each one had more than usual appreciation for good personnel and for the need of safeguarding it. Their authoritative positions influenced public and political opinion to support rather than reject new methods of personnel selection.
5. Each service has continued to have close and beneficial work relationships with the standard public and private case work services of the community. Stimulation from such interchange has much value. Each is subject to the constructive influences of these contacts.
6. Each of these public services constitutes an essential and integral part of the social welfare planning of the community. Each has been and is today closely tied in with activities of the Chicago Council of Social Agencies.
7. Each was and is still able to meet a satisfactory salary scale. Good working conditions did and do now draw superior candidates who desire to compete for appointments in these particular public social agencies.
8. Each of these three public departments has been studied and aided in practical and continuous manner by the professional schools of social work that are located in the community. The worth of this leadership to each has been great. Julia Lathrop and the early group at the old Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy fostered a philosophy of public welfare and sought enduring ways to help the movement. Such contributions of schools of social work in this area has not yet subsided. In recent years the chapter of the American Association of Social Workers, too, has added to this professional insistence. It has interpreted needs for qualified personnel and has urged public demand for more and better merit selection.

It is significant to note how this common background gives basic likeness to the development of current personnel standards and practices in these three Chicago public agencies. Taken together, they have presented an effective and psychologically potent spearhead on which constructive advancement of favorable methods for selection has and does continue to depend in each of these public departments.

Present creditable status of professional personnel in the Juvenile Court of Cook County has been reached only by a series of difficult advances.[1] A few Chicago citizens, active in the 1893 World's Fair for the purpose of caring for children, were awakened by the existing inadequacy of old methods. They determined to found a children's court for better official handling of these important cases. The first "Act to regulate the treatment and control of dependent, neglected and delinquent children" was passed in 1899. Accepting a system for their care, as already established in Massachusetts, probation officers were appointed. A committee of citizens agreed to raise by public subscription the salary of these workers. The chairman was authorized to engage probation officers "as she deems it necessary."

In 1905 an amendment to the Juvenile Court Act permitted for the first time in Illinois support from tax funds of this probation staff. Soon after this legislative change made possible official appointments, the Cook County Civil Service Commission gave examinations, the first of their kind, both for the chief probation officer and for the regular officers of the court. Similar examinations were held again in 1908 and 1911. They appear to cover chiefly spelling, arithmetic, a statement of experience, and some review of general duties. A committee on rules reported the following requirements for one of the last examinations for probation officers that was conducted by the Civil Service Commission: one year's residence in Cook County; citizenship; age limits, male, twenty-one years, female, eighteen years; character, "good moral character," of temperate habits and of sound health.

In 1911 serious administrative difficulties with the Board of Cook County Commissioners, who desired control of the court to afford themselves greater patronage possibilities, began to appear.

Recommendations regarding personnel for the Juvenile Court that were made at this time by an official investigating committee of representative citizens that was appointed to view the situation impartially, are illuminating. This committee be-

1 Parker, Elizabeth: "Personnel and Organization in the Probation Department of the Juvenile Court of Cook County (1899-1933)." (An unpublished dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the School of Social Service Administration of the University of Chicago in candidacy for the Degree of Master of Arts.) This thesis represents much valuable material regarding the Chicago Juvenile Court. The above statement is a digest from this thesis.

lieved the personality qualifications of probation officers so important that "it would be unwise to set any form of scholastic prerequisite." They suggested that the examination was to bring out general education and intelligence as well as qualifications for the particular position.[2] They agreed that there should "under no circumstances be any question which would assume previous experience in the position to be filled." About this time the qualified and able Chief Probation Officer of the Juvenile Court brought suit for reinstatement to his position after his ruthless dismissal for political reasons.[3] By a supreme court decision[4] that section of the Juvenile Court law permitting selection of probation officers by the Board of County Commissioners through its Civil Service Commission was declared unconstitutional. The right was thereafter vested in the court in the person of the Juvenile Court judge. Despite immediate value, real advantage of this particular decision to the juvenile court movement in Illinois has always been a matter of question.

The farseeing judge did not feel that the selection on this basis was a wise method to follow. He appointed, therefore, an extra-legal Citizens' Examining Committee. He instructed them to conduct a competitive examination and to compile a list of eligible individuals for his official use in making appointments. He determined to choose from this list the officers as vacancies arose, and as the County Board appropriated funds for additional personnel. Six hundred applications came to this first Citizens' Committee; 382 people took the examination, and 37 were appointed. A Citizens' Examining Committee of the same sort as this has remained and given service as an increasingly skillful body. It has continued favorable operation because of the reliability of the Juvenile Court judge to select intelligent, interested and qualified committees and because the work of these committees has been undertaken in thorough and honest fashion. Examinations were held at about three-year intervals until 1925, and from that time to the present, about every two years, with increasing competition and efficiency.

Some major results of this experience in personnel selection in the Juvenile Court of Cook County may be listed as follows:

1. Standards have risen rapidly in the twenty years in which choice of probation officers of the Juvenile Court has been made under this system. The examining committee raised the educational requirements in 1933 to a "Bachelor's degree or its equivalent." Since 1933 one year's professional experience in a social service agency of recognized standing or one year of training in a school of social work, including supervised field work, also has been uniformly required. These were progressive steps for all social work. They helped to establish a belief in the community that actual training was necessary if social work was to become an accredited profession.
2. Dependability of examination for selection purposes has been progressively increased by scientific and precise refinement of the examining procedures to measure the fitness of individual candidates. Careful weighting of crude scores that each applicant with initial qualifications earns on written and oral examinations and on the basis of education and experience, has stressed those essential qualities that are recognized as most desired in such professional workers. It has come to give proper emphasis finally to the important personal and professional characteristics of each candidate. The increasing care too, with which all the parts of each individual's examination have been prepared and graded has improved tremendously the selective reliability of these examinations.
3. This method of selection has helped in the face of a good many unfavorable limitations to build more able and more competent court personnel. The quantity and quality of such service to dependent, neglected and delinquent children directly concerns the welfare of these children and of the community.
4. The system has helped to bring a sounder and wider acceptance of social work as a profession. These well chosen probation officers, whose selection is vested in a citizen group that has the confidence of the public, occupy strategic social work positions in that community. Their professional efforts with delinquent and dependent children are more and more recognized as essential welfare services. These officers are looked upon with favor by the community as representative social workers.

The development of a merit system for the selection of personnel in the Cook County Administration of the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission shows many interesting features. This constitutes the second experiment to which attention should be directed.

Rapid expansion of the relief services of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare, which public social agency had been established by statute in 1926, and which became the chief agent in Chicago for the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission in 1932, made many new staff appointments immediately necessary. Since new members

2 See Jane Addams, "The Humanitarian Value of Civil Service," *The Survey*, XLVI, 14, for a discussion of the feeling current at that time.

3 See S. P. Breckinridge and E. Abbott, THE DELINQUENT CHILD AND THE HOME, "Testimony of Judge Pinkney," p. 202. Russell Sage Foundation, N. Y., 1912.

4 John Witter, Appellee v. The County Commissioners, Cook County, et. al. Appellants, 256, Illinois Reports 616 at 619-26 (1912).

of this staff were paid by the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission, they were not at all under the jurisdiction of the Cook County Commissioners nor its Civil Service Commission. The increasing pressure upon the Director of the County Bureau of Public Welfare to appoint poorly qualified persons to these positions indicated that some protective device in selection must be instituted if public funds were to be as efficiently and economically administered as those of private agencies or as those of the Public Bureau prior to its rapid extension.[5]

The Advisory Board of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare, which is an active and representative group of citizens with lay and professional members, appointed therefore a committee on personnel to deal with this urgent situation. This committee was instructed by the Advisory Board to determine standards for all appointments to the service. It was to develop plans for continuous selection of all staff on a competitive, merit basis. Minimum standards for each kind of position that were based on essential qualifying training and experience were carefully established. The plan was approved by those responsible for administering relief in Cook County. A special examining committee that was made up of well qualified persons was appointed to examine fitness of candidates for all positions. Unassembled examinations, with objective and standardized grading for education and experience, as indicated on formal and certified applications, with a subsequent oral interview to determine the general personality qualifications of each applicant, were uniformly instituted.

From May 15, 1932, to June 7, 1935, this Sub-Committee on Selection of Personnel was responsible for developing and administering policies and methods of selection of candidates for all social service positions involved in the administration of public relief in Cook County and for actual staff selections. This committee was also responsible for certification of clerical personnel in Cook County until March 27, 1934, at which time a Personnel Bureau of the Commission itself became wholly responsible for certification of clerical candidates. Suitable executive and clerical assistance was furnished the Selection Committee by the State Relief Commission throughout its activity. This allowed orderly and prompt administration of the rapidly growing service for selection.

A progress report of the Director of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare that was made October 25, 1933, concerning this and other matters related to his department[6], states:

Since approximately June 1, 1932, to date, all appointments of clerical and case aide workers have been made from the certified lists, and since November 1, 1932, case workers have also been subject to certification by the Sub-Committee on Selection of Personnel.

More than 17,000 persons who wished to file applications for positions in the Bureau have been interviewed at the Personnel Office in the past 16 months. Applications have been accepted for all positions until satisfactory eligible lists could be established. Since January 1, 1933, applications have been accepted for clerical and case work aide positions only from persons who were receiving relief. Professional social work positions and certain positions for which it was not possible to find competent persons in the client group have been filled by applications from the general public. Appointments during the past 8 months, however, have not been limited to clients, although preference has been given to clients. The established eligible lists have been drawn upon. More than 9,000 applications for positions have been accepted by the Personnel Office. Of this number of applicants, 5,232 passed preliminary tests and were called for oral examination. Eligible lists established carried the names of 4,989 qualified persons. Of this number, 2,743 persons have been appointed to the Service.

This statement of the Director was made when the Sub-Committee on Selection of Personnel was about halfway through its period of service for the Relief Commission. It represents, however, the peak of the Committee's contribution. It was the first half of its activity that shows the most rapid and important development of this new staff. In June, 1935, the Executive Secretary of the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission decided that thereafter certification was to be the responsibility of an officially constituted Personnel Department. Such administrative division had by then been set up in the Relief Commission. It had competent personnel and it was carefully planned. It had protection and support against internal interference and outside pressure.

Report[7] from the Commission's office regarding the services of the Voluntary Sub-Committee on Selection of Personnel, which were thus replaced by a regular bureau, reads as follows:

This Committee undertook their responsibility with the zeal of individuals devoted to the cause of promoting public welfare, eagerly consulting sources of knowledge and experience in the most approved methods of selection of personnel in industry, business and professional groups. Corporations, business and industrial concerns, social agencies, universities, and many other employers released some of the most competent members of staff to assist in the work of planning personnel requirements and administering tests of qualification. Over a period of years, the monetary value alone of the time contributed by these groups represents an investment in

5 *Social Service Review*, Vol. 7, No. 3, September, 1933, 499; "Report of the Committee on Developing and Protecting Professional Standards in Public Welfare Work." (This report offers a full statement concerning development of personnel practices in the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare.)

6 "Personnel Administration of the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission," Leo M. Lyons, Executive. April 17, 1936. Appendix No. 4, p. 8.

7 Ibid; p. 4.

public welfare that has probably never before been made. The incorruptibility of the members of the Committee in the face of pressure, criticism and sheer fatigue remains a guarantee of the merit principle in public service.

Review of the accomplishments of this particular committee shows some permanent values. These indicate usefulness of this method of selection and may suggest some desirable modifications if the plan is to be tried again, here or elsewhere in the face of any such emergent situation.

1. This plan of careful selection made possible rapid expansion of staff and safeguarded the quality of all personnel in this rapidly growing organization.
2. The plan allowed constructive and upward modification of requirements of education and training which brought constantly better qualified persons into the service.
3. Standards of selection and classification were set up which allowed fair and uniform salary schedules to be established.
4. The Committee on Selection of Personnel, after demonstrating an effective method of operation and establishing suitable standards, yielded its authority to a competent and official department which it had helped to organize. This new Personnel Bureau understood and agreed with the philosophy and practices of the voluntary committee.

The third experiment in selection of qualified personnel on the basis of merit relates to social work in the municipal court of Chicago. In November, 1904, the voters of that community approved a constitutional amendment which permitted the creation by statute of a municipal court for Chicago. The Illinois Crime Survey of 1929[8] which made a thorough study of this court system reports among other matters the following:

On paper the Municipal Court of Chicago is one of the most interesting and important creations of jurisprudence in America. Its influence upon the development of judicial institutions in this country has been incalculable. The administration of the court by the present chief justice has been in the main a remarkable achievement. The personnel of the court in its first years was good. In those days the court was full of men of promise and of no inconsiderable ability. The years have taken a heavy toll, however. The quality of personnel has steadily declined. The majority of the judges now sitting are fitted neither by experience, education, nor, what is more important, sufficient professional standards to discharge with credit the great responsibilities and powers which they possess under the law. The court is full of incompetence, of political influences, of lamentable laxness in meeting an unprecedented tide of crime. In the hands of such a staff the court, technically well organized and full of possibilities for good, yields a sorry product. It is a clear demonstration of the fact that no matter what may be the theoretical advantages of the structure of the court, a personnel so lacking in quality will operate it badly.

Specialized branches of this Court—the Small Claims Court, the Court of Domestic Relations, the Boys' Court and the Woman's Court have long been in operation, as made possible by the provisions of this statute. The social work aspects of these courts have great importance. Their limited usefulness has been a matter of considerable discouragement. At first social workers were supplied by private agencies, as had been done earlier for the Juvenile Court of Cook County. At a later time responsibility for these essential social services was carried by deputy clerks who were assigned to these offices by the Chief Clerk of the Municipal Court, an elected official. These appointees were generally without qualifications except strong political connections.

In the municipal election of 1931, among opposing candidates for clerk of the Municipal Court, was one who was reported to have a good record, special ability, and a fine public spirit. Social workers approached him for a pre-election statement regarding the safeguarding of social work in these special departments. They requested that, if elected, he appoint qualified deputy clerks to these social work positions. They suggested to him a basis of merit selection. It was similar to the voluntary Citizens' Examining Committee that the judge of the Juvenile Court had been using over a long period. The candidate agreed to their proposal. He was supported by the social work group to the best of their ability. He was elected and selection of personnel on this favorable basis was at once established by him in the special branches of the Municipal Court.

Three examinations have been held, in February of 1932, February of 1934, and April, 1935. The method of examination, like the practice in the Juvenile Court, has three parts: a written examination, an evaluation of the applicant's education and experience, and an oral interview. These scores have weighted values that are determined by committee action. Lists of eligible persons are compiled from which the Chief Clerk makes his selections. It is interesting to note that the membership of this examining committee has remained almost unchanged from the first appointments of the Clerk of the Municipal Court. This continued service has invited constructive continuity and better understanding of the demands upon them. It has encouraged wider acceptance of this plan of selection by the community which the committee is serving.

This particular project shows some interesting aspects that merit special comment.

1. Requirements for admission to candidacy were higher in the last examination for this depart-

8 *The Illinois Crime Survey*, 1929, "The Municipal Court of Chicago," p. 393.

ment than ever before experienced in public social service of the Chicago area. It was out and out recognition of the essentialness of professional qualifications for status in social work.

2. Candidates were selected from the last eligible list that was prepared for the Clerk of the Municipal Court for placement in another public department—the office of the State's Attorney. This official had agreed, also on the basis of a pre-election promise, to place on his staff two social workers to be selected on a merit basis. Rather than calling another examination, he concurred with the opinion of a Citizens' Committee that the excellence of this other existing list recommended its use by his department as well. Such joint use of these eligible lists of professional workers seems practical. Further development of the idea may have far reaching influence in more public social services.
3. This Citizens' Examining Committee that was set up for the single purpose of preparing an eligible list has extended its scope upon request of those responsible for social service in the Municipal Court. During the whole period of its activity it has had an important advisory relationship to this staff. The usefulness of such Citizen Advisory groups in public service is unquestioned.

The value of these three Chicago experiments in personnel selection has been great. Even casual survey of the staff membership of these agencies today shows the beneficial influence of such merit plans. The unfavorable position of three other public social services in Chicago—that of truant officers in the public schools, of policewomen, and of adult probation officers in the criminal courts —offers interesting contrast. Despite genuine need for professionally qualified workers in these departments and despite generous appropriations for personnel that are being made, no advance is to be seen in these public services.

The Municipal Civil Service Commission chooses the first and second groups, but on an unsatisfactory selection basis. To walk, to read and to write are still the only requirements for admission to these examinations. Professional status of social work is given no recognition. Adult probation officers are selected with even less formality. They are named by their political patrons. At a recent date, upon invitation of the three chief justices of the courts concerned, a Citizens' Examining Committee gave a well-conducted, competitive examination for probation officers to fill many important vacancies. Although entrance requirements were kept low at the judges' insistence, the list of persons who qualified seemed creditable. In a meeting of all the judges, before the Committee's report was presented for their approval, every vacancy that had existed was filled by a political nomination. The action was made final by a majority vote of Municipal, Circuit, and Criminal Court judges. This voluntary Committee feels pleased, however, that even this degree of progress toward merit selection was made in such an unpromising situation. It is interesting to note that federal judges in the Northern Illinois District who had changes and extensions to plan for on their own probation staff consulted this excellent list and from it made, voluntarily, non-political appointments. Even this slow but certain acceptance of selection on basis of merit offers considerable encouragement.

It is not to be inferred from these Chicago experiences that voluntary merit selection affords as satisfactory or a more satisfactory method of selection than does civil service. These attempts are chiefly efforts of an auxiliary nature. The success of their use, however, suggests certain ways that usual civil service practices, as they relate to professional personnel, might be constructively altered and safeguarded. The following are set forth as some practical possibilities:

1. Official recognition of social work, as one of the professions, allows the establishment of minimum standards of education and training as prerequisites for admission to such examinations.
2. Adequate job specifications tend to limit eligibility to qualified persons.
3. Unassembled examinations prove reliable and economical. Carefully weighted scores of training and experience, the oral interview, and the checking of credentials and references offer satisfactory differential ratings.
4. Use of skilful and adequate professional and clerical assistance, with pay, or on a voluntary basis, seems essential if examinations are promptly and properly given.
5. A Citizens' Advisory Committee in a public agency helps to safeguard standards. It protests situations that make a weak and unsatisfactory department. Its activity may do much to influence favorably personnel matters.
6. Where there are no provisions for civil service, continued use of the voluntary selection system on a basis of merit seems imperative. It is not only a responsibility, but an opportunity of social agencies, of social workers, and of interested citizens, to assist generously in such service.

The importance of careful and continued attention to selection of and protection of public personnel is more and more apparent. The way that has been tried in these three public services of Chicago suggests at least one useful kind of effort in the right direction.

FURTHER NOTES ON AASW SESSIONS IN ATLANTIC CITY

IN addition to the AASW's Program Meeting already reported in the July issue of *The Compass,* there were two further AASW meetings open to the membership.

Meeting on Chapter Organization and Programs

The National Committee on Chapter Organization and Programs sponsored a meeting in which all outgoing and incoming chapter chairmen were invited to discuss the chapter as a factor in advancing the professional performance of social work. Forty-two chapters and councils were represented by 46 chairmen and their representatives. Mrs. Hixenbaugh, presiding as chairman of the committee, opened the informal discussion of problems which come daily to the national office and which resolve themselves increasingly into the chapter's application of professional standards in the various localities. In other words, with about 9,500 of some 9,900 members, organized in 73 chapters in 37 states, the District of Columbia, Hawaii and Puerto Rico it is in the chapter that individual members can actually participate in Association responsibilities, and can contribute to professional activities. It was pointed out that with stimulation from a flow of information from the national office and from other chapters and outside sources through the national office, there develops in the chapter group the desire to translate philosophy and practice into professional formulation and action.

The future of social work, the professional ferment in social work, Walter West said, must be represented in the places where social work is being done and where data can be compared, programs discussed and efforts combined. It is most important, he said, that we multiply the activity and influence of social workers not only in the national headquarters but also many times more in the chapter where, geared to the size and setting of the chapter, increasingly effective methods will be discovered for using the willing and devoted interest which social workers have to spend on their programs.

Mary Stanton, of Los Angeles, spoke of the program factors in a large chapter where wide participation in many committees following the ramifications of the national program, outlined in the November 1935 *Compass,* has necessitated the employment of a full-time executive secretary for the chapter. The financial problem in the support of such paid staff, it was shown, is one that has not been completely met by the large chapters. Activities in the area of public welfare and in the operation of a voluntary system of certification for social workers in California were stressed.

Speaking of a state chapter's opportunities for professional activity with a scattered membership, with two cities as centers for committees and discussion, Louis Horne of Nebraska described the use of a regularly issued bulletin of information. Prompt and effective action on such matters as relief, social security and public welfare generally, are apparently developing in this setting.

Ruth Lewis, of St. Louis, outlining chapter emphasis on personnel standards, described committee work with a civil service commission in setting qualifications for social work positions, drawing up examinations and recruiting qualified candidates.

Developments over a period of six years culminating in the Ohio Council of AASW composed of representatives of non-chapter members and of the six chapters in the state were described by Isabel Walter. Rapid statewide cooperation on legislative measures and questions of public welfare personnel has resulted from this machinery which draws upon the regular work of the smallest and most informally organized groups of members pursuing the same questions as those with which the national and chapter programs are concerned.

Specific problems touched upon included: the relationship of the chapter to state conferences and other social work organizations; methods of securing active participation of the younger members; legislative activity through lobbyists or by direct contact with legislators.

Ray Huff, of the District of Columbia Chapter, called attention to the fact that members in the District require the help of other members throughout the country because regulations governing public welfare in the District are made by Congress to which District employes are not allowed access. Interpretation of agency and personnel in Washington needs to be strengthened through members in other parts of the country in contact with their various congressmen since the District of Columbia has no congressman of its own. Social work positions and salaries have been seriously threatened very recently; and assistance may yet be requested from the Association at large in the interest of public welfare service in the District. The work of that Chapter's Grievance Committee, functioning on requests from members and non-members, Mr. Huff said, has led to a suggestion that findings on working conditions might be filed with Joint Vocational Service. This, it was brought out, has important implications for the knotty problems of personnel references and agency standards and the many

things in these areas which social workers increasingly feel they should study from the professional base in the AASW.

Social workers' problems from another setting were presented by Mrs. de Alvarado, the chairman of the newest chapter to be admitted, Puerto Rico. The relationship between the chapter and the Puerto Rican Association of Social Workers is yet to be worked out, she said. The chapter begins work with 19 members out of 150 social workers. A law licensing social work practice is in operation. Some of the most difficult problems that face the professional social workers result from the discontinued operation of FERA which has been doing most of the social work in Puerto Rico. An amendment to the Organization Act of Puerto Rico is required for the organization of a public welfare department. Inclusion under the Social Security Act of the United States is an issue. There are great uncertainties and the future of social work is unknown. An approved school of social work in Puerto Rico is a recent accomplishment.

Ralph Cole of Honolulu sketched the progress in social work in the Islands; cooperation of the chapter and the Conference of Social Work and the many commissions under the council of Social Agencies is important in the affairs of the Island.

The meeting adjourned after the announcement that such meetings of chapter chairman as this one might regularly be held in connection with both the National Conference of Social Work and with the AASW Delegate Conference.

Meeting of Practitioners Groups

A meeting of those Practitioner Groups which have organized within the AASW was requested and sponsored by the New York City Chapter's Practitioner Group. "A Statement of Philosophy" prepared by a committee of New York members was read by Virginia Maxwell. The paper represented "an effort to think through quite simply the situation of the professional practitioner in social work in relation to the social work scene as it is kaleidoscoped before its professional society, the AASW."

". . . There is a good deal of confusion among us as to where we are heading in this area of social work, and what it is we, as social workers, can or might do while the world in which we function seems headed for destruction."

Speaking to questions that flow from the "world scene," the paper outlined "an environment dominated by the profit motive" where only those social activities are tolerated "which do not interfere too greatly with the profit system. . ."

"The reality of the practitioner's situation in all this," the paper continued, "is that he is in direct and intimate contact with it . . . frequently involved in unstable, punishing kinds of administrations . . . We see in these realities a complete breakdown of standards of work, accepted by our Association and accepted by us as practitioners—standards worked out on the basis of practical experience to which we have all contributed. . . ."

"Another reality of an 'internal' nature which has troubled so many of us is the relationship to the AASW of thousands of workers, who have so to speak drifted into the public welfare field . . . it is not our ignorance which blocks us, but a controlling force which sees only one objective, and that is, the preservation of its power . . . therefore, we will of necessity have to be in continuous contact with a variety of groups, labor, other professional groups, unions of the unemployed, etc. Is this the function of a professional body, we still ask? The answer is, that the time has long since passed when any profession may continue by itself. . . ."

The full implications of the last broad statement were left unclear. The argument was to the effect that professional responsibility to clientele demands that social workers in recognizing that their interests "are not identical with those of the controlling minority," should see to it that the AASW joins with all other groups with which there is common interest. That by this was meant that the AASW as such must above all other things act with all such groups was clear from the fact that this is the chief criterion used in evaluating the whole AASW program in the light of *Compass* accounts. In this paper, the committee examined *Compass* material from 1929 to the present, identified a certain liberalism in resolutions and mass meetings sponsored by the AASW between 1931 and 1936—and then pointed to "a dearth of such activity compared to the need." In spite of the recent emergence of social work professionally, other professional aspects of the AASW program and function seemed to be dismissed with the statement, "The time has long since passed when any profession may continue by itself."

Seeking thus to change the kind of program that the AASW embodies, the committee's paper set forth as basic factors in any conflicting interests in the planning for the professional program, differences in ages and differences in executive and other kinds of professional responsibility. Thus,—". . . our Association is made up of all categories of professional workers, from executives down to the youngest recruit, and all too often, as it happens, the policies are shaped and the action directed by what we may term, if we are to be realistic, our 'top group'. If we were to analyze this situation, further, we might find that this directing group came into social work in times quite different than our own. They may

be said to be oriented to a success era; to be able still to accept a more slow kind of development, but we the practitioners have for the most part come into the field at a later period when the dynamics of our social setting have speeded up. We are more nearly oriented to the changed scene. It has not been necessary for us to ignore the conflict. We see it and understand it and know that it is not to be avoided. . . ."

That which distinguishes the professional social worker's function in daily practice was not suggested in relation to the Association's long-time purpose and function. This seemed to leave the paper searching the differences in social philosophy of individual workers and assuming that unanimity in this pholosophy is essential to professional responsibility.

At this meeting of the Practitioner groups there was also a review of the activities of the Practitioner Group of the Chicago Chapter, prepared by a committee, and presented by Ravenna Van Houten. Program planning for discussion within the group and committee developments were traced with relation to areas of interest and expression of opinion in the Chapter. A distinctive viewpoint within the practitioner group was emphasized and was attributed to the group's more direct contact with clients. The following topics that had been discussed were mentioned as illustrations of areas of interest: The Dilemma of the Case Worker; Can We Afford Relief; Planning a Program of Social Security; Social Workers and Social Action.

Both the report of the Chicago group and an informal report from Baltimore, emphasized certain chapter cooperative activities in broad citizen alliances. Discussion brought out the fact that the group in the New York Chapter had determined upon the following as the definition of a practitioner: "Any member who considers himself a practitioner." This was amplified in the opinion that a practitioner group is made up of "people who think in a certain way."

Thus there was expressed in this meeting as a whole, a desire to concretize individual social philosophy in a particular kind of action in AASW such as is already exemplified in other organizations which exist for the purpose. There was no attempt manifest to reconcile this with the primary aims and operations of the professional association in the interest of the practice of social work as such. The need for a professional association in social work was virtually denied at points.

Because there is vitality underlying the confusion here on organization function, it behooves the Association membership to understand the strength that resides in its by-laws and its purposes, if that strength is to be used to develop the kind of integrity of thinking that is needed to measure professional progress which will stand the test of time and purpose. It is assumed that there is agreement that a professional organization does have professional responsibilities and that there is a professional method of organization. The present confusion may arise partly from the fact that anxiety about conditions which Miss Maxwell emphasized tempts us to forget that the professional enterprise is an integral one while for other lines of expression each member has opportunities for other affiliations.

AASW COMMITTEE MEETINGS DURING THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

IN the occasion of the National Conference there was on the one hand a degree of opportunity for full attendance at committee meetings and on the other a degree of risk in the conflicting commitments for individuals; but eleven national AASW committees met in Atlantic City for work in connection with their regular assignments.

DIVISION MEETINGS

Employment Practices

On May 22, prior to the opening of the National Conference, the Division on Employment Practices held an all day meeting with an adjourned session in the evening.

The emphasis of work was upon: (1) consideration of reports from the members on their local chapter experience with the use of the tentative procedure for considering grievances presented by social workers; (2) consideration of the status of chapter and other studies on standards and practices for social workers; and (3) consideration of a set of working principles for a possible AASW standard of employment practices on the basis of a proposed statement submitted by Rachael Gross, Division Chairman.

Reports indicated increased chapter committee, agency and federation and other study of practices in different parts of the country. The self study interest that seems to have been aroused is perhaps of most significance. Some committees have found that stimulation and permeation of interest in the mutual benefits that can be derived from short time, long time or continuous provision under various auspices for ascertaining current

practices and discussing their merits, promises more far reaching effect than would any specific tabulations or conclusions that could be recorded at this time. Much of the ferment of interest and beginnings of study seems to be leading to an understanding of the relationship between competence of service and the question of known conditions as contrasted with unknown conditions of work. The question of recorded policy is not always the question of good policy; but the principle of a written policy on many matters seem to emerge more clearly when provision is made for discussion of policy and its merits. Thus in most places chapter committees are not ready to make specific recommendations but are convinced about the effectiveness of their role in stimulating self study and review of practices throughout social work in their communities and in appraising general results that come about. It is felt that many improvements will be effected in the process of self study and that a grasp of significant issues will result in a more general demand among social workers for the machinery that will make possible the collection of comprehensive facts about the conditions under which social work is practiced in this country.

It was reported to the Division that a statement of need and recommendation requested from the Division's sub-committee on Research has gone to the national Executive Committee, which will give consideration to further planning for a basic system of fact gathering and interpretation of facts about social work personnel and conditions of work.

The subject of reference writing for candidates for social work employment received some attention in connection with experience in the use of AASW grievance procedure. The work of one chapter committee had just been reported on briefly (in the June *Compass*). The Division raised some questions that relate to the complexity of settings in which social workers acquire their professional education and find their employment. These factors, quite apart from the fact that people differ greatly in their capacity to evaluate personnel and their work, make it difficult to set forth a few simple rules. Some of the problems of transferability of the individual's experience and the problems of agency growth in different community settings were recalled here as summarized in the April *Compass* by Lillian Quinn in an item on recent Joint Vocational Service experience. There is, for instance, the question of reconciling the agency's responsibility to present employes with the agency's obligation to grow and improve its personnel standards. These considerations affect staff turnover, and reference writing, and social workers' professional careers. The Division recommended further work on some of these questions with a view to formulating some material as a basis for AASW membership discussion.

Some consideration was given to the study of cost of living for social workers which has been set up by the Cleveland Chapter and also to large federal government studies that have been planned and in which it would be desirable to have social work included.

The Division's efforts to stimulate retirement planning for social workers, it was felt, should be reinforced by giving publicity to the AASW position on the matter as well as by continuing to carry in *The Compass* information about desirable agency plans that come to the Association's attention. Recommendations should also be made, it was thought, to the Division on Government and Social Work, and perhaps to the recently appointed Advisory Committee to the Social Security Board, on the importance of fostering the principle of adequate provisions under state social security legislation for the retirement of personnel.

Study and revision work on the proposed AASW Statement on Employment Practices occupied a large share of the meeting; and it is hoped that complete agreement can be reached on all sections of the statement in time for release in the early autumn.

Personnel Standards

On May 23rd an all day meeting of the Division on Personnel Standards took up some of the current matters that are important to the Division in its concern to influence and promote personnel standards within and beyond the immediate operation of the Association's by-laws in its administration of membership requirements.

The broad problem of professional education was again emphasized as underlying every issue that is, or has been, before the Division for appraisal.

The merits of the AASW biographical directory—a project fostered by this Division—will be, it was felt, further estimated on the basis of how it moves and gets into use as a device for showing social workers themselves, public officials, and others outside social work, what professional status is at this point in social work; and who are the people who over the past ten or fifteen years have joined forces and created machinery to shape the professional base of social work practice. The need for better understood classifications and common terminology is made obvious in the attempt to compile biographical data on the only group that represents a cross section of social workers who have voluntarily subjected their qualifications to scrutiny in relation to a known set of criteria established at a given point by the group itself.

There was some review of the planned formulations in published articles in *The Compass* on civil service. The problems that are now continually before the national office and the chapters require rather immediate application of what we know and believe about qualifications for social work basically and for positions specifically. The transfer of public welfare functions from emergency to permanent auspices is going forward rapidly under both existing and newly created systems. There is immediate opportunity for social workers to assist in setting up sound procedures and to improve existing machinery although the body of the Association membership is none too well prepared to meet the entire responsibility. *Compass* dissemination of information should include both material on specifications and patterns wherever they emerge and also material that will add to the social workers general background on the merit principle for social work personnel whether administered by law or under the less formal jurisdiction of a private agency board and its executives, as a matter of selecting students for professional education or under a system of certification to the right to a particular social work designation. There has been marked increase in local chapter activity on civil service matters with wide use made of material at hand and resulting in concrete results on classification, examinations, etc. The residence issue looms large in almost every attempt to establish public welfare under civil service. It is a difficult issue for social work, first because the paucity of qualified personnel to meet the existing need is not a well understood fact; and second because at the same time natural sentiment favors filling local government positions from the local population (which in the case of many functions of government is more possible to adhere to than in the case of social work where there are grave inequalities in the geographical opportunities for professional education).

The merit principle favored again in the 1936 Delegate Conference in various connections especially related to security legislation, resulted in recommendations made and written into the AASW platform on government and social work by the Recommendations Committee of the Delegate Conference. It remains for the Association, nationally and locally, to exert its influence in every possible direction to effect the best use of that principle that can be made.

Although recommended committee work to explore certain problems in professional education has lagged, some things of this character have taken shape through other channels growing out of chapter consideration of the problems that produced the early national proposal for a provisionally affiliated group in the AASW. Various activities on ways and means of meeting the problem of the relationship between the professional Association members and others who are practicing in the field of social work, tend to show that the professional Association can do little to assist other groups wherever there is lack of conviction about the meaning of professional qualifications and the function of the professional organization. On the recommendation of the National Executive Committee and this Division, it was recalled, national proposals were abandoned in favor of more experimental chapter planning with various ways and means of relating the professional Association to the pre-professional group in the field. Where one or two chapters moved rather immediately into local unit affiliations on the basis of the original national proposals, the merit of this structural device has not been very clear. There is a tendency to "satisfy" certain immediate desires on external issues such as representation and to fail to realize the meaning of standards and "ladder construction" toward the professional standard.

On the whole the most useful means of relating the Association functionally to the problems of other social workers have emerged in actual work in connection with inducting the best qualified people from both professional and pre-professional groups into permanent public welfare, and the actual work of dealing with the question of competency in grievance situations presented to chapters by persons from either group. Certain accomplishments in these areas make tangible the real relationship between professional social workers and others, and will perhaps point the way to the Association's proper function on this whole question.

In addition there has grown out of chapter discussion in New York City some voluntary exploration of the question of what a standard is and how it can be used leading to the question of where we stand in development of professional education upon which the professional standard is based and what responsibility must be taken by social workers as individual practitioners if status of social work and status of social work clients is to resemble professional content in the minds of the public.

A formulation resulting from this exploration, presented at the Program Meeting of the Association in Atlantic City, indicates the need for increased conviction about standards plus a more vital attack on the conditions under which social work is practiced—the latter being the place where professional social workers really can meet the needs of others in the field.

Both the National Membership Committee and the Division on Personnel Standards continue to feel the need of some experimentation with the

written examination process as a device for meeting certain inequalities in social work that at present prohibit persons from qualifying technically for professional status. Such centralized and continuous experimentation is also essential to a proper understanding of the many questions involved in the professional Association's responsibility for advising with civil service commissions and such bodies on matters of social work personnel. Committee work on these matters should go forward without further delay, it was felt.

On questions of social work placement in private agencies, it is of concern to this Division that Joint Vocational Service has experienced large scale shifts in the specifications and general demands of employers recently, which contrast sharply with the specifications that obtained during the ERA mobilization period. Where "executive ability" and "broad experience" were paramount in the earlier specifications in connection with emergency programs, at present there is a demand for "recent school graduates" and "newer techniques." Apart from the fact that these qualifications are difficult to evaluate it has been true in both periods that the supply of persons meeting the specifications could not satisfy the demand. Displacement results. The AASW, represented on the JVS Committee to deal with problems underlying these shifts and their effects upon social workers, is finding a number of matters that become the responsibility of the Division in relating professional standards to current placement problems and uneven trends throughout the field. Questions of JVS financial support are of concern to the professional association and are requiring some definition of the separate functions of the national organizations whose primary and common concern is with personnel standards.

A report on trends in existing voluntary systems of certification and registration touched also upon the fact that Puerto Rico, which has a law limiting the right to practice, as well as to title in the case of social workers, has had difficulty maintaining the established standards in the face of legislative amendments that have been offered for the extension of qualifications for social workers.

Confusion seems to exist about the relative place and merit of professional education and staff education. The importance of each and the limitations inherent in either require the formulation of some thinking on the subject by the professional Association.

Social work expansion under permanent government auspices has precipitated recruiting activities in a number of fields which lay claim to qualifications for openings in social welfare programs. Consideration of this indicated further work for the Division in matters of differentiating between those positions which require social work qualifications and those positions which may not require such qualifications.

The long range questions about selection and staff training for personnel under security legislation led the Division to agree on the desirability of further formulations about the element of professional qualifications that should or should not be required for posts responsible for administering professional services. It is of importance that the AASW is now represented on a recently appointed Advisory Committee on Personnel to the Security Board and the Children's Bureau. This Committee was initiated by the Association of Schools of Social Work; and the working relation of that Association and the AASW in this connection is of obvious importance.

Among other things that were taken up in this meeting was the Executive Committee's recent assignment to this Division, of responsibility to appraise annually the membership requirements of the AASW in relation to their influence upon social work as a whole.

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Both the Division on Personnel Standards and the Division on Employment Practices recognized that it was important for their members and the national office staff to take note and appraise expressions throughout the National Conference programs on matters concerning social work personnel standards, selection and training. Leadership necessary to the large problems here, it was felt, could only be assumed on the basis of close attention to general current planning and pronouncements.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Meeting of Membership Chairmen

A lively interest in present interpretations of AASW membership standards, the relation of these standards to personnel in the field, and methods of improving the membership procedure, such as more continuity in chapter membership work and more careful evaluation in letters of reference, was expressed at the meeting of chapter membership chairmen held during the National Conference of Social Work. The meeting was attended by representatives from the membership committees of 35 chapters as well as by representatives of the Sub-Committee on Section 6 and the Sub-Committee on Technical Requirements of the National Membership Committee.

Concern was expressed over the present large intake of junior members as compared with full members, what this means to the standard represented by Association membership, and what it means to the schools of social work at the present time in terms of pressure to provide minimum training to the possible detriment of their programs for full-time students who must be their

first responsibility. The conviction was expressed by a number of representatives that the Association should discontinue the junior membership requirements in the near future. It was also felt that the Association should devote attention to broadening programs of professional education in cooperation with the Association of Schools to meet the problem presented by the fact that training opportunities for fields other than case work are at present lacking in many of the schools, and also to the development of an examination procedure to test the qualifications of practicing social workers who do not meet the professional education requirement.

It was the discussion of present interpretations of the technical requirements which, through recognizing some social work curricula outside the member schools, and through the experimental supervised practice procedure, make it possible for more persons to meet the present junior requirements, in contrast to the present restricted interpretation of Section 6, under which only a very small number of older, experienced workers with exceptional records are admitted, which led to the consideration of ways in which a better balance might be achieved.

On membership procedure, there was considerable discussion of reference letters and whether chapters had had any success in drafting letters of inquiry which produced anything more than perfunctory responses. One work reference was considered desirable, but it was pointed out that in the case of junior members this does not have much value unless they have had at least a year of experience, which the requirements do not call for in all cases. Inquiry as to technical qualifications was considered useless, since those writing references cannot be expected to have accurate information on this. The problem, therefore, narrows down, the group thought, to the question of whether general statements that "ethical and professional standards are satisfactory" are sufficient or whether efforts should be made to secure more concrete statements regarding professional ability. The group favored the latter and requested the national office to analyze reference letters which contain some evaluation of professional ability and to draft a letter of inquiry which will bring out this kind of information for use by the chapters if they wish to adopt it. This would be in no sense a detailed evaluation of performance such as would be used for employment purposes, but a more concrete picture of the applicant's ability to function on a professional level that is given in most letters of reference for membership applicants.

Interest in strengthening local membership committee work through provision for more continuity of service on chapter membership committees was strongly expressed by representatives of chapters where such continuity is lacking. It is the practice in a number of chapters to have one of the officers—vice-president or secretary, for example—serve as membership chairman, which means a new membership chairman every year. It was recognized that the membership work is an important responsibility of the chapters, that it requires study to become familiar with the process of applying the requirements, and that the best way to meet this responsibility is by having the membership chairman appointed to this office, rather than elected, and assisted by a committee of sufficient size so that a number of members can be held over each year to provide continuity.

Joint Meeting of AASW Committee on Technical Requirements and Association of Schools Committee on Extra-Mural Teaching

This meeting was held for informal discussion of problems presented by the AASW membership standards that need study by both Associations. It was recognized in the discussion that the adoption of these standards has placed a heavy responsibility on the Association of Schools and that the provision for partial training under the junior membership requirements causes particular difficulty since it forces on the schools the question of what proportion of their limited budgets shall be allocated to part-time students trying to acquire credits for junior membership and what proportion to full-time students.

There was unanimous agreement by the two committees that the AASW field work requirement is the one which causes the greatest complications. The part-time courses which many of the schools have been offering for employed social workers are enabling a substantial number of persons who have recently entered the social work field to acquire the course credits needed for junior membership but no provisions have been made for supplementation with field work on a part-time basis except by one or two schools.

Realizing this situation and the problems faced by the schools in expending their field work facilities—problems which include lack of agency as well as financial resources—the AASW set up its experimental supervised practice procedure as an interim measure until such time as the schools might be in a better position to expand their field work. In setting up this procedure, the AASW has been unwilling to sacrifice the standard of training implicit in its membership requirements and has therefore safeguarded the procedure with a number of controls which have tended to limit the number of applications to a relatively small group but which have also been productive of some interesting and significant results.

Both committees agreed that numerically the problem will be very much greater next year than now because of the number who will then have accumulated through part-time courses the course credits necessary for junior membership. Opinion in the meeting was unanimous that unless the schools can prepare to meet this situation through expansion of field work, the AASW will have to deal with it for the time being through the supervised practice procedure.

The outcome of the meeting was a decision to present a joint report to the business meeting of the Association of Schools in Atlantic City, outlining the problem as seen by the two committees and recommending certain points for study by the Association of Schools. These points were as follows:

1. Need for increased field work facilities in school centers to bring field work opportunities more in balance with part-time courses.
2. Review of part-time courses now offered with a view to providing continuation of courses rather than repetition, so as to give part-time students something more nearly approaching an integrated curriculum.
3. Provision of courses adapted to needs of older workers—a particularly important factor in meeting the need for qualified supervisors in expanded field work programs.
4. Study of present geographical distribution of member schools to determine extent of unmet need, whether this need can be met through extension courses by present schools, or whether new schools are needed.
5. Need for advice and guidance by the Association of Schools at an earlier stage in the development of new schools than is now usually the case. Full consideration could then be given during the formative period to such factors as geographic need, agency resources, quality of pre-professional and related science courses, availability of qualified instructors, all of which factors can be more adequately evaluated by the Association of Schools than by the AASW, which might then consider limiting its accrediting function to schools which have received probationary approval from the Association of of Schools.

Although all of the immediate suggestions for study which resulted from the joint discussion are directed to the Association of Schools rather than to both Associations, this came about from the fact that the committees found themselves in agreement on the fundamental issue, namely, that modification or discontinuance of measures taken by the AASW to solve problems involved in its membership standards which relate to availability of training facilities, must necessarily depend on the extent to which the schools can meet these problems. This agreement led to a most satisfactory discussion of the mutual interest and responsibility of the two Associations for a solution which will bring facilities for professional education more nearly in line with the present needs and demands of the field.

HOUSING NEWS

The Housing Division of the Public Works Administration in its report of June 24th, 1936, lists forty-one federal housing projects as being in the process of construction, three of which are in the demolition stage and four completed, the Colombia Terrace in Columbia, S. C.; the Cedar Springs Place in Dallas, Texas; the College Court in Louisville, Ky., and the Cheatham Place in Nashville, Tenn.

* * *

The construction work on the Ironwood Homesteads, near Ironwood, Michigan, was started on July 8th. This is a project of the Resettlement Administration and will house four hundred low-income families. Several acres of land will be set aside for the tenants to raise some of their own fruits and vegetables. Three hundred families have already filed applications for homes on the project, which it is expected will be completed in December.

* * *

At the Sixty-third Annual Meeting of the National Conference of Social Work, the Committee on Social Aspects of Housing held two morning sessions on housing on May 25th and 26th. The topics dealt with the problems of community life in rural and urban areas and the problem of health in these areas. The speakers were: Clarence A. Perry, Russell Sage Foundation; Abraham Goldfeld, Lavanburg Foundation; May Lumsden, New York City Housing Authority, and Dr. Haven Emerson, Columbia University. About one hundred and fifty persons attended the two sessions. The Housing Committee of the AASW organized a special meeting to discuss the Wagner-Ellenbogen bill.

* * *

President Roosevelt signed the George-Healey bill (S. 3247) establishing the policy of the Housing Division of the PWA in operating low-rent projects. The two most important provisions of this act are: (1) providing for the payment of service charges in lieu of taxes as agreed by the Administrator, and (2) retaining of both criminal and civil jurisdiction over project areas by the city.

* * *

"Houses and the People Who Live in Them" is a study of the housing conditions of 140 families made by the Family Society of Philadelphia. It is for sale by the Family Welfare Association of America, 130 East 22nd Street, for 25c.

* * *

A "Summary of Hearings on the Wagner Housing Bill" has been published by the National Association of Housing Officials, 850 East 58th Street, Chicago, Ill.

Civil Service Schools

In this period of transfer of welfare services from emergency to permanent auspices, the national office of the AASW has had a number of requests for information about various "civil service schools." The following excerpt from a communication from United States Civil Service Commission will clarify some points on which members of the Association may be asked for advice:

1. No civil service school has any connection whatever with the Civil Service Commission, or with any other branch of the government.
2. The Commission has no agents who solicit applications for civil service positions, or who sell "civil service" courses.
3. No school can properly "guarantee" government employment.
4. No school has advance information regarding the need of civil service employes or the announcement of examinations.
5. No school is given information regarding examination questions or any other information which is not available to the general public.
6. The Commission does not recommend any school.
7. It is not necessary to take a course with any so-called civil service school in order to compete in any of the Commission's examinations.

Information regarding examinations for the federal civil service may be obtained at any time, *without cost*, from the Secretary of the U. S. Civil Service Board at any first or second class postoffice, or from the U. S. Civil Service Commission, Washington, D. C.

Vacation Reading Lists

Several orders for *This Business of Relief* (Proceedings of the 1936 AASW Delegate Conference) which have come to us during the past ten days bear a notation asking that the book be rushed so that the member could include it on his vacation reading list.

Other members who are going on vacation late this year and those who have returned but can devote more time to reading will want to include *This Business of Relief* on their lists, particularly in the light of what is happening in Illinois, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, to mention a few current crises.

Relief will be an issue in the coming Presidential campaign. Dr. Colston E. Warne, of the economics department of Amherst College, in an address before the delegates to the Summer Institute of Social Progress at Wellesley, Mass., said, ". . . The most immediate and pressing issue of the 1936 political campaign is that on relief."

We believe, and are constantly being reminded by others who have read *This Business of Relief*, that the collection of papers which make up the volume, combined with the Outline for a Federal Assistance Program, constitute source material on the general subject of public aid that cannot be equalled.

Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, Scripps-Howard Newspapers feature writer, quoted from Grace Marcus' paper in this volume last week in discussing the New Jersey relief situation in her column in the New York *World Telegram*. During the coming campaign it is likely that the various candidates may also find quotable passages. At any rate copies have been sent to President Roosevelt, Governor Landon and Norman Thomas, all of whom have acknowledged them.

Members who have not placed their order for this book are urged to do so at once. An order blank is located on the back page of this issue for your convenience.

Copies are one dollar each, with a special twenty per cent discount to schools, chapters and other organizations ordering twenty-five or more copies shipped to one address. The publication of this volume is a non-profit enterprise and by simplifying office routines for bookkeeping and handling, the national office is able to offer the book to members at the one dollar price, postage prepaid. If your order is placed today the book can be put in the mails immediately and should reach you within ten days.

Resolutions Adopted by National Settlement Federation

The following resolutions are among those which were adopted by the National Federation of Settlements at its Conference in Norris, Tennessee, June 3-7, 1936:

The National Federation of Settlements reaffirms its conviction that slum clearance and rehousing throughout the United States are a matter of federal as well as state and local concern. No remedy for the insufferable housing conditions of low income families can be secured without government subsidy, low interest rate and long amortization. Housing is a national responsibility, as well as a local one. The low wages which make public housing necessary are related to country-wide economic and social causes which cannot be fastened in full upon any one community.

A much more vigorous national campaign of education and legislation is in order. As members of settlements in close contact with the intolerable conditions under which so many of our citizens live, we pledge ourselves to further the public housing movement until adequate provision is made to meet this need. We urge the immediate passage in this session of Congress of the Wagner-Ellenbogen Housing Bill.

Within a month, in passing on the Guffey Coal Act, the United States Supreme Court has declared that Congress cannot legislate with respect to wages in industries within a state. Within a week, in passing on the New York State Minimum Wage Law, the

Supreme Court has declared that a state itself cannot do so. We come from industrial districts, North, South, East and West all over the country, for which the founding fathers presumably believed they were establishing government. We join with those who abhor this vacuum in our power to govern and who propose to do something to overcome low wages and long hours. A way must be found to permit both the states and the nation to regulate maximum hours and minimum wages for men, women and minors. If a Constitutional amendment offers the only solution to a more liberal interpretation of this power to regulate these and other degrading labor conditions, we endorse such an amendment.

The National Federation of Settlements wishes to go on record as in favor of work relief as the most original contribution made by America to the handling of unemployment. Work relief carries three distinct advantages over direct relief: it preserves the morale of the worker; it enables him to maintain his skill which is often his only capital; and, properly organized, it results in substantial community projects. This is so where such projects take the form of better roads, schools, playgrounds, swimming pools, and the rest. No less important are the less tangible forms of greatly expanded educational, cultural and recreational service for those heretofore deprived of the opportunity to learn, develop and enjoy. Work relief should be planned with foresight; it should be absolutely free from political favoritism; its wage structure should be revised. Because of the time pressure under which the federal program was instituted it has been marred at various points and stages by administrative deficiencies, by haphazard dismissals and sudden shifts in policy, which have often discounted its real values. We recommend that projects should be reviewed by local committees to assure their social usefulness and to make sure that they are adapted as far as possible to using and conserving the skills of the unemployed.

We believe that the time is ripe to institute a rehabilitation program, nationally and locally, which will set as its goal the physical restoration, the retraining and vocational equipment of a vast number of wage-earners now classed as unemployable. A new chapter in human conservation can be written if the Works Progress Administration, Relief Administrations and Public Welfare Departments, the schools, the medical and nursing professions, social workers and vocational trainers are united and focussed to this end. One phase of it is illustrated here in the Tennessee Valley, where thousands of farm households are displaced to make way for the great impounding reservoirs. We were impressed with the resourcefulness of the Removal Division of the TVA in relocating farm owners. But legal opinion held that TVA funds could not be used to rehabilitate tenant farmers in new locations and only a handful of such families were helped by other federal or state agencies. Yet a fresh start with equipment to make good would make for their self dependence hereafter. Another phase of the same problem awaits a new and constructive program for migrants and transients—men, women and children now without a state and hence without a country.

Our member houses are located in neighborhoods which have felt keenly the disastrous consequences upon community, home and child life that have come with the withdrawal of federal relief funds. From many localities come reports of an exceedingly low relief allowance, lack of medical care and the non-payment of rents, and of the continuous anxiety of those members of a family who are responsible for the care of others. We strongly recommend that the federal government at once recognize the persistence of the relief problem as something which cannot be fully met by local resources. This reaches its extreme when states shift the loads to counties and counties to townships, so that in many instances the need is greatest in the very localities where the resources are least. We are dealing with a national problem, national in its cause, and in the attempt to decentralize relief the burden should not come down on those least able to bear it. The states themselves should assume their full share of responsibility. We urge the resumption of federal grants-in-aid; that cash relief shall be given; and that the minimum essentials of decent living shall be covered by standards set, including shelter, food, clothing, medical care, etc. We urge that personnel shall be protected on a merit basis and that this new stage of unemployment relief be made the occasion for instituting modern public welfare departments, federal, state, county and city.

Simultaneously we urge the passage of state laws which will make available to their states, federal funds for old age pensions and insurance, unemployment compensation, child welfare and public health. We are conscious that the Social Security Act has many limitations and shortcomings. These call for change, but the first step is to get its benefits down to the people everywhere.

With re-employment in private industry lagging woefully behind business recovery we urge expansion of the public works program, and development of public employment services.

We look forward to the day when the right to work will be a reality in America. At best, unemployment relief is an inadequate substitute and so is work relief when it is limited to men and women whose resources are gone. To supply real work at real wages is the fundamental test of democracy to control the economic forces which make for depression and unemployment. We look forward to the day when our economy will be so planned that a decent standard of living and the enrichment of life by satisfying work and play may be the natural possession of every individual in the United States of America.

Settlement workers have been deeply aware of the frustration, waste and demoralization to youth during the hard times. With them have gone limitations of education, loss of skill and energy. We welcome the National Youth Administration as a fresh approach to the situation faced by our young people. We urge its continuance and the more carefully planned expansion of its program toward the end that youth everywhere, whether on relief or not, shall have an opportunity alike for education and useful work. The American future depends upon the released and applied intelligence of the oncoming generation no less than the utilization of their skilled hands.

OHIO CHAPTERS DRAFT SPECIFICATIONS FOR PUBLIC WELFARE POSITIONS

SPECIFICATIONS for positions in public social work, drawn up by the Committee on Personnel Standards of the Columbus Chapter, were published in the May issue of the *Focus*, the organ of the Ohio Council of the AASW. Critical study by similar committees in the other Ohio chapters was requested in order to arrive at a practical statement of qualifications on which the Ohio Council would agree.

The specifications as drawn up by the committee of the Columbus Chapter are given below, together with revisions suggested by the Cleveland Chapter which are similar to changes recommended by the Toledo Chapter.

SOCIAL WORKER, GRADE I

Qualifications:

A. Graduation from an approved school of social work plus three years of full time case work experience in approved agencies within the last ten years and demonstrated executive ability.

or

B. Graduation from a college or university of recognized standing, having completed at least 118 semester hours' credit with emphasis on social sciences, plus five years full time case work experience in approved agencies within the last ten years. Must have demonstrated executive ability. (Twenty-four semester hours' credit in approved school of social work may be substituted for two years of such experience, but in no case shall experience be less than three years.)

or

C. The Commission may open the examination to persons who possess qualifications which are a satisfactory equivalent combination of foregoing education and experience requirements. The applicant shall have had not less than five years of successful social work experience.

Age: Preference will be given to applicants between the ages of 24 and 50.

Duties: To be responsible for original work in formulation of policies and procedures for the program of the organization. To train and direct staff and be responsible for the case work procedure of the organization. To interpret to the staff and others and to put into effect the general policies formulated and to perform related work as required.

Salary: Minimum salary, $200 per month.

Note: This examination is open to all qualified persons who are citizens of the United States.

Preference will be given to those applicants having had training in a recognized school of social work.

SOCIAL WORKER, GRADE II

Qualifications:

A. Graduation from approved school of social work plus one year of full time case work experience in approved agencies.

or

B. Graduation from a college or university of recognized standing, having completed at least 118 semester hours' credit with emphasis on social sciences plus three years' full time case work experience in approved social agencies. (Twenty-four semester hours' credit in approved school of social work may be substituted for two years of such experience.)

or

C. The Commission reserves the right to open the examination to persons who possess qualifications which are a satisfactory equivalent combination of foregoing education and experience requirements. The applicant shall have had not less than three years of successful social work experience.

Age: Preference will be given to applicants between the ages of 24 and 50.

Duties: To interpret or assist in interpreting to the staff and others and putting into effect the general policies of the organization. Planning and directing staff conferences; interpreting community and organizations' needs and deficiencies; making special investigations and adjustments; holding individual conferences with staff for the review of cases, and performing related work as required.

Salary: $125 to $175 per month.

Note: This examination is open to all qualified persons who are citizens of the United States.

Preference will be given to those applicants having had training in a recognized school of social work.

SOCIAL WORKER, GRADE III

Qualifications:

A. Graduation from an approved school of social work.

or

B. Graduation from a college or university of recognized standing, having completed at least 118 semester hours of college credit with emphasis on social sciences, plus two years' full time in approved agencies. (Twenty-four semester hours' credit in approved school of social work may be substituted for two years of such experience.)

Age: Preference will be given to applicants between the ages of 21 and 40.

Duties: Under Direction: To perform case work service through investigation to determine eligibility of a family for relief, such as blind relief, aid to dependent children, old age relief, to determine the extent of financial needs through the use of carefully planned family budgets; to attempt to meet these needs within the financial resources of the community, to provide the necessary food, shelter and clothing for families so that they might be maintained on good health standard; to procure special physical care for individuals and families; to keep accurate and immediate information on each family; to organize work so that all details are cared for according to regular systematized routine; to carry out and interpret general policies and necessary limitations outlined by the supervisor; to recognize complicated and unusual behavior among clients as a matter for discussion with supervisor; to make clear evaluation of all the factors in the family difficulties; to interpret to community the simpler problems of relationship resulting from financial strain; to recognize for discussion with supervisor the existence of problems in families which may not be traceable to financial need; to prevent or counteract the breakdown in family relationship.

Salary: $100.00 to $150.00 per month.

Note: This examination is open to all qualified per-

sons who are residents of the State of Ohio.

Preference will be given to those applicants having had training in a recognized school of social work.

SOCIAL WORKER, GRADE IV

Qualifications:

A. Graduation from a college or university of recognized standing, having secured at least 118 semester hours' credit with emphasis on social sciences.

Age: Preference will be given to applicants between the ages of 21 and 40.

Duties: Under Supervision: Through investigation to determine eligibility of family for relief; to determine the extent of financial needs through the use of scientifically planned family budgets; to attempt to meet these needs within the financial resources of the community; to provide the necessary food, shelter and clothing for families; to keep accurate and immediate information on each family; to organize work so that all details are cared for according to regular systematized routine; to carry out and interpret general policies and necessary limitations outlined by the supervisor; to recognize complicated and unusual behavior among clients as a matter for discussion with supervisor; to make clear evaluation of all the factors in the family difficulties; to interpret to community the simpler problems of relationship resulting from financial need; to prevent or counteract the breakdown in family relationship.

Salary: $80.00 to $110.00 per month.

Note: This examination is open to all qualified persons who are residents of the State of Ohio.

CHANGES RECOMMENDED BY CLEVELAND CHAPTER

General

The grades should be applicable to specific positions. Grades I and II should apply to executive and administrative positions and Grades III and IV to case workers and visitors under supervision.

Grade I, A

Experience requirement should be increased to five years, three of which have been in executive capacity. The AASW should be prepared to define a recognized social agency wherever the term is used throughout the specifications.

Grade I, B

The experience requirement should be increased to eight years, three of which have been in an executive capacity. In the sentence in parentheses the experience should be raised to six years.

Grade I, C

Any statement suggesting "equivalents" should be omitted in line with current thinking of those who have studied civil service. Recommended change to read: "The Commission may open the examination to persons without the above educational requirements if they have had ten years of successful experience in a recognized social agency, at least five years of which were in executive capacity."

Age qualifications for Grade I group too low at both ends—suggested change to 27-60, as no one under 24 could qualify under experience recommendations and suitable persons over 50 should not be eliminated as long as there is no provision for pensions.

Grade II, A

Experience requirement should be raised to three years, one of which has been in executive capacity.

Grade II, B

Experience requirement should be raised to six years, two of which have been in executive capacity.

Grade III, C

Recommended change similar to that under Grade I, C, to read: "The Commission reserves the right to open examination to persons without above educational requirements who have had eight years of successful experience in a recognized social agency, three of which were in an executive capacity."

Copies of Directory Available at Pre-Publication Price

As announced in the July issue of *The Compass* there is a limited supply of copies of the Directory of Members available at the original pre-publication prices ($1.50 paper cover; $2.00 cloth cover). These copies, which were reserved for members who failed to send their orders prior to July 15, are being made available to members as long as they last. Orders should be accompanied by a check and will be filled in the order of their receipt.

"Relief Clients Want to Work"

The myth that persons on relief prefer to receive aid rather than work received another setback recently in Illinois.

A rule that an employable person applying for aid must first produce signed statements from three local employers to the effect that the applicant had asked for work and did not receive it, was abolished.

The reason? Large employers wrote that relief clients were so aggressive in their efforts to obtain work that employment offices were swamped.

Some Problems in Civil Service

Social workers interested in establishing social work positions under public welfare auspices with selection by means of application of a merit system and with insured means of promotion will find a number of helpful sections in a new publication, *The Administration of Civil Service in Massachusetts.** The sections on Remuneration, Entrance Qualifications, Educational Requirements, Examinations, Certification, Process of Appointment, Recruitments, Service Ratings, Removal and Retirement will be found particularly valuable.

There is an interesting table in the appendix showing under nine classified types of work the percentage of appointments received by veterans from the years 1925 through 1932. One of these

* *The Administration of Civil Service in Massachusetts,* with special reference to State Control of City Civil Service. George C. S. Benson, Harvard Political Studies Department of Government. Harvard University.

classifications is that of social workers in which it is shown that: in the year 1925, 15.5% of the appointments were veteran appointments; for the year 1926, 14.6%; 1927, 24.3%; 1928, 21.95%; 1929, 37.5%. For the year 1930 the ratio drops to 16.7%; for the year 1931, it is 17.2%, and for the year 1932 there is an increase to 25.2%.

The chapter on Conclusions is quoted in full below because in these conclusions there is an emphasis upon the professional character of many of the issues in the administration of civil service, and these issues concern social work positions in public welfare:

I. *For the Political Scientist*

Our two hypotheses which, like most hypotheses in social science, have been only partially proved are:

First, that unless some professional spirit be introduced, there may be just as much politics within civil service as outside of it.

Second, that state administration of local civil service has aroused so much political antagonism and caused so much political friction that standards were lowered rather than raised. We do not wish to imply that state administration would always have that result; we merely wish to assert that it has had that result in Massachusetts.

In the chapter on recruitment it was demonstrated that the lack of a modern examining technique and a number of restrictive legislative provisions were traceable in large part to the unpopularity of state control of municipal civil service. It was noted that the development of state wide eligible lists—one of the best features of a state administered personnel system—had been neglected.

The chapter dealing with veteran preference showed that Massachusetts had granted more preference than the federal government or most of the states. This fact seems to demonstrate the politically vulnerable nature of the Massachusetts personnel system partially, perhaps, a result of state supervision. Associations of employees have not, as in other jurisdictions, done much fighting against preference—an illustration of their unprofessional attitude.

In the chapter on promotions it was noted that large groups of organized employees who were lacking in professional spirit had exerted pressure on the Civil Service Commission to secure most of what they wanted in promotion—a demonstration of the first hypothesis.

The chapter on removal protection analyzed an unusual feature of Massachusetts personnel policy—judicial review of removal. It was observed that here, too, non-professional-minded employees had forced very cumbersome restrictions on the administrative process—again proving the dangers of internal politics.

The chapter on state-local relations demonstrated that none of the advantages of state-wide interchange of personnel had been attained under, and that much friction had been caused by, state control of a municipal matter. The inference is that other states would do well to avoid such an experiment.

II. *For the Citizens of Massachusetts*

So much for the political science side of the picture. The writer cannot refrain from adding a few suggestions for improving the present methods in Massachusetts.

1. Recruitment would be greatly improved by the use of intelligence tests and by development of state-wide eligible lists.

2. Little can be done about the veteran problem except to fight off entrance without examinations, which is in danger of being extended to Spanish War, then World War Veterans. Higher standards on examinations for inspectional and social service posts are desirable.

3. The promotion system would be improved by less emphasis on seniority, lower age maximums for promotional examinations, and, above all, the introduction of some form of service ratings.

4. Judicial review of removals should be changed to review by an administrative board of some sort. Compulsory retirement ages should be established for police and firemen.

5. The Commission should make a greater effort to be friendly and tolerant in enforcing civil service rules in municipalities. It should try to be an effective personnel agency giving service to local governments, not a watchful duenna of employee rights.

6. The Commission should make definite efforts to establish close, friendly relationships with organizations of public employees. Training courses, welfare work, and frequent conferences might result in a more public-spirited personnel, and closer commission-employee cooperation would probably also facilitate the solution of problems of promotion, removal, and veteran preference.

Book Notes

Social Case Recording. Gordon Hamilton, Columbia University Press, New York City. Price $2.50.

A book which those who have been waiting for a discussion of practice in recording, with illustrative material, will want immediately. Will be reviewed in October *Compass.*

Social Work as a Profession. Esther Lucile Brown. Russell Sage Foundation, New York City. Price 75 cents.

Dr. Brown's study which was published as a pamphlet a year ago, has now been brought out in a bound volume containing some new material and revisions necessary to bring it up to date. The monograph is one of a series on the professions which Dr. Brown is preparing. It is the most valuable single description which has so far been published of the current professional status of social work.

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